

RECEIVED  
CENTRAL FAX CENTER

Serial No. 10/735,504

JAN 16 2007 Docket No. 129234-1

REMARKS

Applicants appreciate the consideration shown by the Office as evidenced by the Office Action mailed on April 10, 2006. In that Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-33 and objected to the drawings. In this Response, Applicants have amended the specification, and amended claims 1 and 19. Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration in light of the above amendments and the following remarks.

Objection to the Drawings

The Examiner pointed out that reference number 40 described in paragraphs [0011], [0015], and [0016] was not shown in the figures. Applicants have removed reference number 40 from these paragraphs in the specification in accordance with the above amendments. Furthermore, the Examiner pointed out that Figure 2 contains reference numbers 240, 400, and 420, which were not described in the specification. Applicants have amended the specification to include these reference numbers. Please see the amendment to paragraph [0012]. Applicants appreciate the Examiner's remarks pointing out these oversights, and respectfully submit that these amendments completely and properly address all drawing objections raised by the Examiner.

Claim Rejections

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claims 1-33 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Rock (US 5,181,826) in view of Walden (US 6,089,825). Rock describes radial distortion of an annular casing of a gas turbine engine during service, generally into an elliptical shape. Rock also describes a shroud support configured to attenuate the radial distortion from a mounting flange transmitted to a shroud hanger. Rock does not discuss coatings disposed on the casing or shroud. Walden describes a turbine assembly comprising a shroud substrate on which an abradable sealing layer is disposed, as a means to minimize leakage in the turbine assembly.

The combination of references cited above fails to teach, suggest, or disclose all limitations recited by the rejected instant claims. In particular, the combination fails to fairly suggest a coating having a non-uniform thickness that varies as a function of circumferential position along said inner surface of said base component, as recited in amended independent claims 1 and 19 of the present application. The Examiner's remarks in the "Response to Arguments" section of the Office Action indicate that the Examiner agrees that the "formation of a coating having a non-uniform thickness would not be obvious in view of the cited references." As such, Applicants believe that the

Serial No. 10/735,504

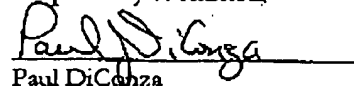
Docket No. 129234-1

amendments to claims 1 and 19 render these claims, and their respective dependent claims, allowable over the applied combination of references.

After careful review, Applicants have chosen not to make a similar amendment to claims 18 and 33, because Applicants believe that the limitation of a non-uniform thickness is already inherent in the claim as originally filed. In both claims, an annular base component is recited, and this base component has a substantially circular cross-section. Further, a coating is disposed on the base component, and this base component has an outer surface having an elliptical cross section. For a coating residing on a circular substrate to have an elliptical surface profile, the thickness must inherently be non-uniform; if it were uniform then the coating's cross section shape would match that of the substrate. The Examiner, in rejecting claim 2, stated that it would be obvious that the coating formed on an elliptical casing would be elliptical; Applicants agree, so long as that coating applied were of uniform thickness. But Applicants respectfully point out that there is nothing taught, suggested, or disclosed in the applied references about a coating having an elliptical profile when the base component on which it is disposed is circular. For these reasons, Applicants believe that claims 18 and 33 inherently recite a coating having a non-uniform thickness, and thus these claims are also allowable over the applied references.

In light of the amendments and remarks presented herein, Applicants believe that this serves as a complete response to the subject Office Action. If, however, any issues remain unresolved, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided below.

Respectfully submitted,



Paul DiConza

Reg. No. 48,418

General Electric Company

Building K1, Room 3A60

Telephone: (518) 387-6131

Niskayuna, New York  
Tuesday, January 16, 2007